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THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

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Some time ago a letter came into my hands, in which the writer, Miss Janie Hill Miller, asked for help toward the working out of a paper on The Value of Latin as a Foundation for the Study of the Modern Foreign Languages (German, Spanish, or French, particularly Spanish and German).

I found myself unable to make any statement on the direct value of the study of Latin to the student of German. On the indirect value of the study of Latin in this connection, through the light which the study of Latin throws on the structure of language in general, and on grammar, it would be easy enough to speak.

In answer to the rest of the question, I suggested a study of the development of the Romance Languages and their relation to Latin. Here, the article entitled Romance Languages, in the Encyclopedia Britannica¹¹, and a book by C. H. Grandgent, An Introduction to Vulgar Latin (see THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 2.60-62) will be of service. They will help one to understand how French and Italian words, Spanish words, etc., correspond to Latin words, and will show that a knowledge of Latin should make it easier to master the vocabulary of French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, and to get control of the syntax of those languages. It happens that there has not been very much on this general subject in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY. Compare, however, W. W. Comfort, The Value of the Classics: An Outsider's View, 3.18-22; Caroline Sheldon, Latin and Greek for Students of French, 4.218-220; S. E. Hurlbut, La Bella Lingua, 4.170-172; Caroline Sheldon, The Preservation of the French Language in Canada, 4.86-87.

That a good deal can be done even with such a small bibliography is made plain by the very interesting paper which, under the title Latin as a Preparation for the Romance Languages, Miss Miller has since contributed to the pamphlet, The Classics in Mississippi To-day, 12-18 (for the pamphlet see THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 10.105). Reference may be made also to a paper entitled How Latin Helps in the Study of Spanish, issued by the Publicity Committee of the Wisconsin Latin Teachers' Association (see THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 9.106).

All this makes one think of the extent to which the study of Spanish, for the moment, is thriving in American Schools. Some see, indeed, in that study a new danger to Latin: they are afraid that many students will be led, by what they regard as 'practical' considerations, to substitute the study of Spanish for the study

of Latin. I am of the opinion that the experience of the next five or ten years will prove that to American boys and girls the commercial value of a knowledge of Spanish is extremely small. However that may be, it is worth while, so long as the study of Spanish remains fashionable, to point out to pupils how irrational is the substitution of the study of Spanish for the study of Latin. It ought to be easy to make it plain to most pupils that the study of Latin can help greatly in gaining control of Spanish, so that, if they are minded to study Spanish with purely practical considerations in view, they are going about it in the wrong way if they neglect Latin.

C. K.

In THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 6.169-170, reference was made to an imitation of a Roman volumen, entitled *Carmina Octo Q. Horatii Flacci* edidit Georgius Vincent, which in the form of a 'parchment' scroll gave first the text of eight Odes of Horace, printed in capitals, then translations into English. This scroll was published in 1888 by F. A. Stokes and Brother. The right hand end of the scroll was fastened permanently to a wooden rod, which had two projecting knobs or bosses; the bosses and the main stick were, apparently, all in one piece. The bosses were painted white; the stick itself was invisible. There was no rod at the left hand end. Originally a *titulus* was attached to the scroll.

The major part of the article referred to above was devoted to the *umbilicus* (or *umbilici*). Attention was called to the view set forth by Th. Hirt, *Die Buchrolle in der Kunst* (Teubner, 1907), 228-235, that the *umbilicus* was not fastened to the roll and that it did not project beyond the *frontes*; it was merely inserted in the roll and was removable at will. When one unwound the roll as he read, he could shift the *umbilicus* to form a center for the part read as he wound this up loosely. The use of two *umbilici* began in Domitian's time. Before the reading began both were within the roll; as the reading progressed one was allowed to remain in the roll, the other was inserted in the part read.

Some time ago Messrs. Ginn and Company, in advertising Professor B. L. D'Ooge's Latin for Beginners, put the advertising material on a scroll six feet long by eight inches high. "This reproduction of a Roman book of the Augustan age" had a rod at each end permanently attached to the scroll; each rod had a boss at the top and at the bottom. Though published after the appearance of Birt's book, no account was

taken by the author of this scroll of Birt's view of the *umbilici*. Aside from this matter, however, the scroll may well be of interest and help to teachers of Latin.

C. K.

A GLANCE AT THE LYRIC VOCABULARY OF HORACE¹

Many lovers of Horace, I am inclined to believe, agree with Mr. Postgate when he says of Professor Shorey's edition of the Odes and Epodes, "If I were limited to three editions of the Odes, this would be one"². Yet, with all my gratitude for the suggestive interpretations, with all my pleasure in the wealth of parallel passages, with all my appreciation of the Introduction, which contains phrases well nigh as felicitous and unforgettable as Horace's own, I cannot find myself in complete accord with all Professor Shorey's judgments. Mindful of Professor Gildersleeve's remark that "he who loves Horace needs all his magnanimity when he finds that another understands the poet better than he does"³, and his suggestion that "many will have to say that of Professor Shorey", I viewed with suspicion my failure to subscribe to Professor Shorey's estimate of the vocabulary of the Odes. But the disagreement survived the suspicion, and persists, even in spite of Professor Gildersleeve's somewhat rueful acceptance of the comment with which I disagree. This comment is, in part, as follows⁴:

A study of Horace's style must be mainly an analysis of the art by which he compensates for the slenderness of his own inspiration and the relative poverty of the Latin lyric vocabulary.

Again he says (xviii-xix),

In considering the means with which he worked, the first thing that strikes us is the simplicity, not to say poverty, of his poetic vocabulary. In translating Greek lyric the student must ransack his dictionary for terms rich enough to represent the luxuriance of the Greek compound epithets. In rendering Horace the problem is to select from the superior wealth of the English poetic vocabulary synonyms which may be introduced without dissonance to relieve the monotony or vagueness of his epithets, and so reproduce by compensation the total effect of rhythm, emphasis and 'artful juncture' in the original. This parsimony . . . is mainly due, first, to the relative poverty of the Latin vocabulary, and, secondly, to the peculiar difficulty of forcing Latin words into the alien mold of Greek lyric measures. . . . These conditions perhaps made inevitable the frequent use of simple, vague, metrically convenient epithets and phrases. Whatever the explanation, the fact remains.

To sum up, then, the vocabulary of the Odes is characterized, in Mr. Shorey's opinion, by poverty, monotony, vagueness, and regard for metrical con-

venience, this last quality implying, one must infer, a corresponding lack of any other *raison d'être*.

Yet this same vocabulary impresses Mr. Mackail⁵ quite differently. Having likened Horace's process to that of "a gem engraver, working by minute touches on a fragment of translucent stone", he goes on to say:

With very great resources of language at his disposal, he uses them with singular and scrupulous frugality; in his measured epithets, his curious fondness for a number of simple and abstract words, and the studious simplicity of effect in his most elaborately designed lyrics, he reminds one of the method of Greek bas reliefs.

In Sellar's Horace and the Elegiac Poets, also, we discover the same disposition to view as a deliberate achievement that choice of vocabulary which Professor Shorey finds at best a regrettable necessity.

He can convey much feeling and meaning by use of the simplest and commonest words, such as 'brevis', 'vacuus', 'integer', 'improbis', 'vagus'⁶.

Several of these simple and common words are identical with those selected by Professor Shorey wherewith to establish his own judgment, and perhaps we can best further our scrutiny of that judgment by examining these specific instances. If these selected instances fail (as Mr. Sellar's partial duplication of them suggests they might fail) to support the contention based on them, if indeed, impartially considered, they lead to an opposite conclusion, we need scarcely pursue our purpose further.

One of Mr. Sellar's illustrations, it will be noted, is the first word which Professor Shorey chose for comment, as follows (xix):

The wind blown sand, the meandering streams, the far travelled Hercules, the overflowing river, the wandering birds of the air, the straying herd, the wind that bloweth where it listeth, and the nomad Scythians are all alike *vagus*.

At first reading one is struck by the contrast between Mr. Shorey's picturesque phrases and the bare little word. But upon second thought the question arises: Where did he get those picturesque phrases? If the stark little epithet is really so poor and inadequate, what right has he to translate it so richly? Examination of the passages cited furnishes the answer. The first is from the plea of the dead sailor washed ashore by the storm, for the ceremony that will enable his shade to cross the Styx (C.1.28.21-25):

Me quoque devexi rapidus comes Orionis

Illyricis Notus obruit undis.

At tu, nauta, *vagae* ne parce malignus arenae
ossibus et capiti inhumato
particulam dare.

'Wind blown sand'? Yes, surely, for the winds are all about us as we read. 'Tis the wind that has made the hapless corpse its prey and plaything, 'tis protection against the wind that is invoked to reward the bene-

¹This paper was read at the Tenth Annual Meeting of The Classical Association of the Atlantic States, held at Central High School, Philadelphia, April 15, 1916.

²The Classical Review 15.230.

³American Journal of Philology 31.485.

⁴Horace: Odes and Epodes. Edited by Paul Shorey. Revised by Paul Shorey and Gordon J. Laing. Boston: Benj. H. Sanborn and Co. (1911). See page xvii.

⁵Latin Literature, 114.

⁶Horace and the Elegiac Poets, 194. (All references to Sellar, throughout this paper, are to this book).